This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

1-6.   (Canceled)

7.   (Currently Amended)   A method for use in a computer system for converting a text representation of a number into a numeric representation of the number, said method comprising:

maintaining a correspondence of number format descriptions to convertors, wherein the descriptions of the number formats indicate at least one of integer places, a decimal point, and decimal places;

converting the text representation of the number into a description of the number's format indicating at least one of the integer places, the decimal point, and the decimal places without intending to indicate the numerical values of the numbers in the integer and decimal places;

mapping the description of the number's format to the convertor corresponding to the description of the number's format, wherein the covertor comprises a sequence of conversion code; and

executing the convertor corresponding to the description of the number's format to convert the text representation of the number into the numeric representation of the number by use of the sequence of conversion code.

8.   (Original):   The method of claim 7 wherein the description of the number's format is a picture string.

9.   (Original):   The method of claim 7 wherein the text representation of the number is converted into a description of the number's format by a translate instruction using a translate table.

10.   (Original)   The method of claim 7 wherein the sequence of conversion code for converting the text representation of the number into the numeric representation of the number comprises an assignment statement.

11.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 7 wherein the mapping of the description of the number's format to the converter comprises mapping the description of the number's format to an index which is used to transfer control to the converter corresponding to the description of the number's format.

12.   (Original)   The method of claim 7 wherein if the text representation of the number does not convert into the description of the number's format, then not executing the subsequent mapping and converting steps.

13-18. (Canceled)

19.   (New) The method of claim 11, further comprising:
    determining whether the index comprises a valid index, wherein the mapping of the description of the number's format to the convertor comprises using the index to determine the convertor corresponding to the description of the number's format.

20.   (New) the method of claim 19, further comprising:
    returning an error indicating that no conversion was performed in response to determining that the index does not comprise a valid index.